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Kavussanu, Maria

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Moral Behavior in Sport

Maria Kavussanu

School of Sport and Exercise Sciences

University of Birmingham, UK

Abstract

The last decade has seen an important shift of focus in research on sport morality. Researchers have moved from a focus on moral judgment as a moral outcome to the examination of morally relevant behavior. This chapter reflects this shift and reviews research on sport behaviors that could be classified within the moral domain. Different labels have been used to refer to such acts including prosocial, antisocial, aggressive, and bad/poor. The chapter begins with a discussion of the moral domain and an overview of the main approaches used to measure moral behavior in sport and continues with an extensive review of dispositional and social-environmental factors associated with moral behavior in sport. Next, the effects of demographic and context characteristics on moral action is discussed, followed by a brief review of interventions conducted in physical activity settings. Finally, implications for morality in other performance domains are offered and directions for future research are provided.

Keywords: Morality, aggression, prosocial behavior, antisocial behavior

Introduction

Three years ago, in a softball game at Central Washington University, an incident occurred that captured national attention in the USA: A player hit a home run but tore her ligament while trying to reach first base; being unable to move meant that she would not achieve her goal of hitting her first ever home run. Instead of taking advantage of this injury, two opposition players carried her to touch the second and third bases, and then home plate, thereby helping her achieve her goal. This incident was described as an unbelievable act of sportsmanship, and is a shining example of a social act that had positive consequences for its recipient. Unbelievable acts with *negative* consequences for others also occur in sport. Some notable examples are the rugby player Tom Williams faking an injury to his mouth by biting on a fake blood capsule in a UK Premiership rugby-union game and the boxer Mike Tyson biting off part of Evander Holyfield's ear in response to repeated head butting. Although these are extreme acts, other behaviors that could have positive or negative consequences for others' well being are more common in sport (see Kavussanu, 2006; Kavussanu, Seal, & Phillips, 2006). This chapter focuses on research dealing with such behaviors.

Behaviors that have consequences for others' rights and welfare are the subject of the moral domain. For example, Turiel (1983) found that children and adolescents perceive an act as moral transgression when the behavior has consequences for the victim. Moral stimuli used in the research of Turiel and his colleagues (see Turiel, 1983) concern welfare and physical harm (e.g., pushing, shoving, and hitting), psychological harm (e.g., teasing, hurting feelings, ridiculing or name calling), fairness and rights (e.g., breaking a promise or destroying others' property), and positive behaviors (e.g., helping another in need, and sharing).

Others view morality in a broader manner. Thus, for Walker (2004) morality is a fundamental and pervasive aspect of human functioning that consists of both interpersonal and intrapsychic components. It refers to voluntary actions that have, at least potentially, social and interpersonal

implications and are governed by internal cognitive and emotive mechanisms. Violation of established conventions - which for Turiel are not part of the moral domain - can also provide moral offense, and illegal substance use and abuse – which may be viewed as a personal matter - could have health and behavioral consequences for others.

In both views of morality, the interpersonal consequences of moral actions are highlighted as a distinguishing feature of the moral relevance of behavior. Walker's (2004) definition also highlights the *potential* consequences of actions that are morally relevant. Finally, for Walker (2004) moral functioning is multifaceted involving the dynamic interplay of thought, emotion and behavior. Others (e.g., Rest, 1984) have also described multiple components of morality including moral judgment, moral intention, and implementation of behavior.

In the context of sport, cognitive and behavioral aspects of morality have received much research attention in the past 30 years. Some examples are moral reasoning (Bredemeier & Shields, 1986), judgments about the legitimacy of injurious acts (Duda, Olson, & Templin, 1991), sportspersonship orientations (Vallerand, Briere, Blanchard, & Provencher, 1997), moral attitudes (Lee, Whitehead, & Ntoumanis, 2007), aggression (Stephens & Bredemeier, 1996), moral judgment, intention, and behavior – collectively referred to as moral functioning - (Kavussanu & Roberts, 2001), and prosocial and antisocial behaviors (Kavussanu, 2006). Although the significance of moral cognition (and emotion) for morality is unquestionable, the present chapter focuses on moral *behavior*. In part, this is due to the volume of sport morality research that has been accumulated in the last ten years. The reader is referred to other reviews of the literature for a comprehensive account of other aspects of morality (e.g., Kavussanu, 2007; Shields & Bredemeier, 2007).

Much of the research conducted in sport has investigated negative social behaviors (see Kavussanu, 2007; 2008), for example trying to injure an opponent, verbally abusing another player, and cheating. The term antisocial behavior has been used to refer to such acts. Specifically, antisocial

behavior has been defined as voluntary behavior intended to harm or disadvantage another (Kavussanu, 2006; Sage, Kavussanu, & Duda, 2006). More recently, prosocial sport behaviors have received increased research attention (see Kavussanu, 2008). Prosocial behavior is voluntary behavior intended to help or benefit another individual or group of individuals (Eisenberg & Fabes, 1998), and examples in sport are lending equipment to an opponent, helping another player off the floor, and encouraging, supporting, or congratulating a teammate. In most sport studies, prosocial and antisocial behaviors have been either inversely associated - with small to medium correlation coefficients - (e.g., Kavussanu, 2006; Boardley & Kavussanu, 2009; Sage & Kavussanu, 2008) or unrelated to each other (e.g., Sage et al., 2006). Consideration of both types of behavior provides a more complete account of the moral conduct that takes place in sport. As Bandura (1999) has put it “people do good things as well as refrain from doing bad things” (p. 194).

Prosocial and antisocial behaviors typically have positive and negative consequences respectively, for others. Thus, helping an injured player should alleviate his or her distress, and kicking a player should cause him or her to experience pain. However, Kavussanu and Boardley (2011) point out that if the player does not feel any pain (e.g., because he or she is distracted or has taken analgesic medication), the behaviors will not have the expected consequences. Similarly, encouraging a teammate may not benefit the athlete who cannot appreciate such encouragement, verbally abusing a player will not cause psychological harm to the individual who is able to ignore the insults, and cheating will not have a negative consequence for others if the offender is caught and the situation is rectified. Thus, prosocial and antisocial behaviors have the *potential* to affect others.

The most widely investigated class of antisocial behavior is *aggressive* behavior, defined as overt behavior (verbal or physical) that is purposeful (non-accidental), chosen with the intent of causing injury, and has the capacity to cause psychological or physical injury to another (Husman & Silva, 1984). The distinction has also been made between instrumental aggression, which is behavior directed

at the target as a means to an end (e.g., injuring a player to get a competitive advantage), and hostile aggression, which is behavior toward another who has angered, or provoked, the individual and is an end in itself (Husman & Silva, 1984). Aggression has long been investigated as a moral issue and discussed in reviews of moral development and behavior (e.g., Shields & Bredemeier, 1995; Tangney, Stuewig, & Mashek, 2007).

In the psychological literature, the term moral behavior has been used to refer to aggression (e.g., Tangney et al., 2007), and prosocial and antisocial behavior (Sage & Kavussanu, 2007a). These behaviors are morally relevant because they can affect others. In this chapter, the term moral behavior is used to refer to a broad range of *intentional* acts that could result in positive or negative consequences for others' psychological and physical welfare. The chapter begins by discussing how moral behavior has been typically measured in sport, particularly in the last ten years, and continues with empirical research examining individual difference and social environmental factors associated with such behavior. Next, demographic and context characteristics are discussed followed by a review of intervention studies. The chapter ends with potential implications of sport morality research for other performance domains, conclusions, and directions for future research.

The Measurement of Moral Behavior in Sport

In this section, the methods most commonly utilized to measure moral behavior in sport are briefly described. The reader is referred to Kavussanu and Boardley (2011) for a more complete review of these methods. The main methods used to measure moral behavior in sport are self-reports, coach ratings and behavioral observation and coding. Within each of these categories, only the instruments utilized in most studies reviewed in this chapter are discussed.

Self-reports

Many researchers, following the lead of Ebbeck and her colleagues (Gibbons, Ebbeck, & Weiss, 1995; Stuart & Ebbeck, 2005), have assessed behavior as one of the four components of morality

described in Rest's (1984) model. The other components, that have been typically measured along with behavior are judgment and intention. However, only the behavior measure is discussed here, in line with the focus of this chapter. Behavior is measured by asking participants to indicate - on a scale ranging from "never" to "very often" - the frequency with which they engaged in the behaviors described in some hypothetical scenarios during a specified period of time. An example of a scenario devised by Kavussanu and Roberts (2001) is:

Imagine yourself during the last minute of a critical basketball game. A player from the opposite team is going for a fast break, and you are the sole defender. Because of your position, the only way to stop the player from making the basket may result in an injury. You have to decide whether to risk injuring the player to prevent the basket. (Kavussanu & Roberts, 2001, p. 42)

Three or more scenarios pertaining to different moral issues, for example pushing an opposing player when the referee is not looking, faking an injury, and risking injury to an opposing player, are utilized. Participants' responses across scenarios are averaged to form a single score for behavior frequency. This method is good when one wishes to assess moral judgment and intention, because the conditions surrounding the moral issue are clearly delineated. However, it is less than ideal for the assessment of moral behavior. This is, in part, because the behaviors described in the scenarios are highly specific. Thus, it is possible that athletes may have not engaged in the specific behaviors described in the scenarios but may have engaged in other behaviors not captured by the measure.

The scenario approach has also been used to measure aggression. Most studies have used a scenario that is part of the *Judgments about Moral Behavior in Youth Sport Questionnaire* developed by Stephens and colleagues (Stephens & Bredemeier, 1996; Stephens, Bredemeier, & Shields, 1997) to measure players' judgments about what might be done in a game situation that requires a moral decision. Stephens and Bredemeier (1996) operationalized moral behavior as self-described likelihood to intentionally aggress against an opponent. The aggression scenario is:

Sue has been caught out of position on defense, and now the opposing team's best player, Wendy, is dribbling toward a one-on-one situation with the goalkeeper. While Sue has no hope of stripping Wendy of the ball, she could tackle from behind, tripping Wendy and preventing the shot. Sue knows that tackling from behind is dangerous, and Wendy will probably get hurt. Sue has to decide whether to tackle from behind.

Participants are asked to imagine being in Wendy's position and identify, out of six situations, the one that represents the most tempting motive to trip Wendy from behind. Then, they are asked to imagine being in the situation they identified as most tempting and indicate - on a scale ranging from "not at all likely" to "very likely" - how likely they would be to trip Wendy (or another protagonist) from behind. Responses to this item measure self-reported *likelihood* to aggress. This variable is a proxy for aggressive behavior because it does not refer to behavior that has occurred but the likelihood that such behavior will occur in a hypothetical situation. Although the original instrument developed by Stephens et al. (1997) included scenarios referring to lying and cheating, it is the aggression scenario that has been most commonly utilized in sport research. One limitation of this measure is that because it is a single item measure, its reliability cannot be determined.

Another self-report method used to measure moral behavior in sport is by asking athletes to think about games and matches they have played during a competitive season and to indicate - on a scale ranging from "never" to "very often" - the frequency with which they engaged in certain behaviors. Participants are presented with a list of items referring to prosocial (e.g., helping an opponent off the floor, helping an injured opponent) and antisocial (e.g., faking an injury, physically intimidating another player) behaviors (e.g., Kavussanu, 2006; Sage & Kavussanu, 2007a, 2008). Responses are averaged to provide one score for prosocial and one for antisocial behavior. However, in these studies the prosocial behavior scale had relatively low internal reliability (α range = .64 - .74). Moreover, the

instrument was devised to be used with soccer players, thus some items (e.g., diving to fool the referee) are applicable only to soccer.

A more comprehensive attempt to develop a measure of prosocial and antisocial behavior, coupled with the explicit distinction between behavior directed toward teammates and opponents, was made recently. Based on data from basketball, soccer, hockey, netball and rugby players recruited from 103 teams, Kavussanu and Boardley (2009) developed the *Prosocial and Antisocial Behavior in Sport Scale*, which consists of four subscales. Two of them measure prosocial behavior toward teammates (e.g., encouraged a teammate) and opponents (e.g., helped an opponent off the floor) and two measure antisocial behavior toward teammates (e.g., verbally abused a teammate) and opponents (e.g., intentionally distracted an opponent). Behaviors directed toward teammates and opponents are different, which is a reflection of the reality of team sport. For example, it makes sense that a player would intentionally distract his opponent to put him at a disadvantage but not a teammate, as this would conflict with his own interests. This instrument has good-to-very-good reliability (α range = .74 - .86) and is valid for use in a range of team sports. However, its correspondence with behaviors actually occurring in a game is yet to be determined.

Finally, some researchers have adapted instruments created for use in other contexts to the context of sport (e.g., d'Arripe-Longueville, Corrion, Scoffier, Roussel, & Chalabaev, 2010; Rutten et al., 2008). For example, Rutten and colleagues (2008) adapted two questionnaires measuring prosocial and antisocial behavior in nonsport contexts and named their scale the *Sports Behavior Inventory*. The scale measures antisocial behavior (e.g., "I shout abuse to others during matches") and prosocial behavior (no example provided) on the field and includes two other subscales that measure prosocial and antisocial behavior off the field. Respondents indicate the frequency of behavior on a scale ranging from "never" to "always." Rutten and colleagues (2008) reported very good internal consistency for

antisocial on-field behavior ($\alpha = .80$) but only marginally acceptable reliability for prosocial on-field behavior ($\alpha = .66$).

A limitation of self-report measures is that they have not been validated with behavioral observation. Some evidence indicates that self-reported antisocial behavior during the season has been strongly associated with observed behavior during a game at the team level (Kavussanu et al., 2006). However, it is not known whether players' self-reports of their prosocial and antisocial behavior during a game or a season correspond to their actual behavior during these periods. This issue could be investigated by obtaining observational self-reported data in a single game to determine the degree of congruency between these two sets of data.

Coach Ratings

Coach ratings are another method used to assess moral behavior. For example, Stuart and Ebbeck (1995) presented coaches with five short "moral dilemmas" describing behaviors such as injuring another player to prevent a basket, pushing an opposing player when the referee is not looking, teasing a team-mate, and arguing with an official over a bad call. Coaches were asked to think about practices and games throughout the season and indicate - on a scale ranging from never to always - how frequently their athletes engaged in the specified behaviors, for example argued with an official over a bad call. Coaches' responses to the five dilemmas were averaged to form a single score of behavior. This measure has shown very good internal reliability ($\alpha = .82$). Coach ratings are a good method of measuring behavior, particularly if ratings from more than one coach are obtained.

Observation

Behavioral observation and coding has been a fairly popular method to measure moral behavior in sport in recent years. Researchers using this method typically videotape games, and subsequently code players' behaviors using observational grids that contain operational definitions of the behaviors that are to be measured. For example, the prosocial behavior of congratulating an opponent has been

operationally defined as “Clapping or hand shaking after good performance” (Kavussanu, Stamp, Slade, & Ring, 2009). Then, trained observers code the frequency of behaviors from videotaped games, and the total number of occurrences is used to indicate prosocial behavior, antisocial behavior, or aggression (e.g., Kavussanu et al., 2009; Rascle & Coulomb, 2003; Sage & Kavussanu, 2007b). In studies of instrumental and hostile aggression (e.g., Coulomb-Cabagno & Rascle, 2006; Rascle & Coulomb, 2003), an observational grid has been employed that includes two sets of behavioral categories: one for instrumental behaviors occurring during play (e.g., repelling, retaining, hitting and cheating for example stalling game), and one for hostile behaviors occurring when the ball is not in play (e.g., insulting, threatening, making obscene gestures or shoving, against opponents, referees, teammates and others). The rationale for this classification is that if an aggressive behavior does not occur during play it cannot affect the outcome of the game, thus it cannot be instrumental. Factor analyses have confirmed that these two sets of behaviors represent distinct factors (e.g., Rascle & Coulomb, 2003).

In sum, coach ratings, behavioral observation and coding, and self-report measures have been used to assess moral behavior in sport. Self-report measures include scenarios describing moral issues with accompanying items asking about behavior frequency (or likelihood) and instruments that consist of items referring to a range of behaviors. Although the measures described in this section have been utilized in *most* studies discussed in this chapter to investigate antecedents of moral behavior in sport, some researchers have used other measures. These measures have been briefly described when the findings of the relevant studies are reviewed.

Individual Differences as Antecedents of Moral Behavior

Research in sport morality has proliferated in recent years. Much of this research has centered on dispositional variables as predictors of moral action. Some researchers' primary interest has been in understanding moral behavior, but others have investigated moral behavior as a potential outcome of

motivational constructs. As a result of both sets of efforts, our knowledge of moral action in sport has been considerably enhanced. In this section, empirical research on individual difference variables as antecedents of moral action in sport is reviewed. The constructs that have received research attention – and are discussed below – are achievement and social goals, motivation types, fear of failure, passion, moral identity, moral disengagement, and self-regulatory efficacy.

Achievement Goals

Sport is an achievement context. It is not surprising therefore that the link between achievement goals and moral sport behavior has received so much attention. The achievement goal construct, is part of achievement goal theory (Nicholls, 1989), which posits that individuals engage in achievement contexts such as sport in order to demonstrate or develop competence. Two major goals operate in such contexts: task and ego orientation. These goals reflect variation in the manner in which individuals construe competence and evaluate success. Task-oriented individuals tend to use self-referenced criteria to judge competence, and feel successful when they master a task, whereas ego-oriented people tend to use other-referenced criteria to evaluate competence and feel successful when they do better than others. Due to their focus on normative superiority, ego-oriented individuals may engage in rule-violating and cheating behaviors to facilitate this goal (Nicholls, 1989). In contrast, because task-oriented athletes evaluate their competence via self-referenced criteria, cheating and aggressing against another to demonstrate competence in the normative sense is irrelevant. Playing by the rules and experiencing a fair competition should provide a true test of their competence (Duda et al., 1991).

These proposals have been supported by a number of cross-sectional field studies that have examined achievement goals in relation to sport morality. Specifically, university team-sport athletes high in ego orientation were more likely to report low levels of moral functioning as reflected in judgment, intention, and behavior (Kavussanu & Ntoumanis, 2003). Similarly, adolescent and adult soccer players high in ego orientation reported engaging in antisocial behavior while playing soccer for

their team (Kavussanu, 2006; Boardley & Kavussanu, 2010; Sage & Kavussanu, 2007a; Sage et al., 2006); in one study, ego orientation was inversely associated with prosocial behavior (Kavussanu, 2006). In contrast, task orientation has evidenced the reverse pattern of relationships: High task oriented soccer players were more likely to engage in prosocial behavior and less likely to engage in antisocial behavior while playing soccer (Kavussanu, 2006; Sage & Kavussanu, 2007a).

To date, only one experiment has manipulated achievement goals to examine their effects on prosocial and antisocial behavior. Specifically, Sage and Kavussanu (2007b) randomly assigned University students to a task, ego, or control group and recorded via a hidden camera (and subsequently coded) their behaviors during two table-soccer games. Examples of coded behaviors are congratulating the opponent and alerting the opponent to missed goal counts for prosocial behavior and breaking the rules and deliberate cheating for antisocial behavior. Participants in the ego-involving group displayed significantly more antisocial behaviors than those in the task-involving and control groups. Although the three groups did not differ in observed prosocial behavior during game play, the task-involved participants were more likely to allocate bonus goals to their opponent to be added to their final goal total, which led to the award of raffle tickets for use in a £ 50 cash-prize draw.

Overall, the findings of the studies described above highlight the importance of motivational goal orientation on athletes' moral behavior. Athletes whose primary focus is on demonstrating competence in the normative sense by outperforming others also seem to operate at lower levels of morality. These findings are consistent with Rest's (1984) proposal that motivation is one of the factors that influence one's decision on how to behave as well as subsequent behavior. The findings also show that the critical goal that may affect antisocial conduct in sport is ego orientation. However, task orientation has a clear link to prosocial behavior. Individuals who tend to focus on self-referenced achievement appear more willing to help others in the athletic context. That task orientation has been primarily associated with prosocial behavior highlights the importance of investigating both prosocial and antisocial

behavior in sport. These findings clearly show that the two achievement goals play a role in different aspects of moral behavior.

Social Goals

Although the development or demonstration of competence is a primary motive for engaging in achievement contexts such as sport, sport is also a social context. Thus, individuals may also participate in sport for social reasons. Indeed, Allen (2003) has described three social goals in physical activity contexts: social affiliation, social recognition and social status. Individuals high in social affiliation seek to develop and maintain mutually satisfying relationships in sport and play sport for the opportunities to socialize with other like-minded people. Those high in social recognition are oriented toward validating themselves through approval or recognition from others, while those high in social status seek validation through achieving popularity among peers. To date, only one study has examined Allen's (2003) social goals in relation to moral behavior in sport. Specifically, Sage and Kavussanu (2007a) found that youth soccer players, who pursued social affiliation and social recognition goals, were more likely to behave prosocially toward their teammates and opponents. In contrast, players who were oriented toward achieving social status were less likely to engage in prosocial and more likely to engage in antisocial acts; the effects of social goals on behavior were modest in magnitude. Thus, playing sport for social reasons may have implications for the type of behavior in which athletes engage in that context.

Motivation Types

Self-determination theory has made a distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation (Deci & Ryan, 1985). Intrinsic motivation refers to doing an activity for its own sake in the absence of extrinsic rewards or incentives, while extrinsic motivation involves doing an activity for extrinsic reasons. However, different types of extrinsic motivation have also been described depending on the degree to which behavior is self-determined (or autonomous). Motivation types reflect different reasons

for participating in sport and these reasons have implications for behavior. Athletes who participate in sport for the pure enjoyment they derive from the activity are more likely to be concerned with fair play, whereas those who take part in order to receive external recognition, awards, or prestige are more likely to bend the rules and engage in behaviors that may facilitate extrinsic gains (Donahue et al., 2006).

Donahue and colleagues (2006) examined the link between motivation types and use of performance-enhancing substances in 1,290 national-level adolescent athletes from a variety of individual and team sports. Athletes who participated in their sport for intrinsic reasons (e.g., I play sport for the satisfaction I experience while I am improving my abilities), were more likely ($\beta = .42$) to report higher sportpersonship reflected in respect and concern for the rules and officials and respect for social conventions. The opposite relationship was observed ($\beta = -.10$) between extrinsic motivation (e.g., I play sport for the prestige of being an athlete) and these two sportpersonship orientations. Importantly, sportpersonship orientations were inversely associated ($\beta = -.23$) with athletes' reported use of performance-enhancing substances to specifically improve their performance in the previous 12 months. This finding makes sense as using such drugs is against the rules, which is incompatible with the respect for rules dimension of sportpersonship.

An interesting integration of constructs from achievement goal and self-determination theories has been carried out by Vansteenkiste and his colleagues (Vansteenkiste, Mouratidis, & Lens, 2010). These researchers examined whether pursuing performance approach goals - conceptualized as the *aim* to do better than others (Elliot & McGregor, 2001) - for autonomous or controlling reasons has implications for moral functioning in sport. Participants were asked to indicate whether their aim was to do better than their opponent, and to what extent they pursued this goal for autonomous (e.g., because this goal is a challenge to me, because I personally value this goal), or controlling reasons (e.g., because I can only be proud of myself if I do so, because I would feel ashamed if I wouldn't

pursue this goal). They also responded to measures of immoral functioning, such as antisocial behavior, sportspersonship attitude, and aggressiveness. Finally, objectifying attitude was measured; this is players' tendency to downgrade their opponents and to perceive them as barriers that need to be overcome at all costs to achieve their aim. Controlling reasons positively predicted objectifying attitude, which in turn was positively associated with immoral functioning. The indirect effect of controlling reasons on immoral functioning through objectifying attitude was small ($\beta = .15$). Interestingly, although autonomous reasons and performance approach goals did not predict objectifying attitude or immoral functioning, they were strongly associated with each other.

These findings suggest that trying to win per se is not as important as are the reasons why one pursues this goal. Aiming to win for controlling – but not autonomous - reasons is more likely to lead to antisocial conduct when playing sport. It is also worth noting that the null finding for performance approach goals and immoral functioning is not in line with the consistent links between ego orientation – a construct similar to the performance approach goal - and antisocial behavior identified in previous research (e.g., Kavussanu, 2006; Boardley & Kavussanu, 2010; Sage et al., 2006); this suggests that the performance approach goal construct is distinct from ego goal orientation. Aiming to outperform one's opponent is not equivalent to the tendency to evaluate competence using normative criteria. In sum, it may not be the aim to win but rather the pre-occupation with doing better than others that might lead to unfairness and lack of concern for others.

Fear of Failure

Another motivational construct that is relevant to moral behavior in sport is fear of failure, or the motive to avoid failure in achievement contexts. Individuals high in fear of failure have learnt to associate failure with aversive consequences and typically perceive failure in evaluative situations as threatening. To date, only one study has investigated fear of failure in relation to antisocial sport behavior. Specifically, Sagar, Boardley and Kavussanu (2011) examined fear of failure and antisocial

behavior in sport and education in university team-sport athletes. Players who reported high fear of failure were more likely to also report engaging in antisocial behavior not only toward their teammates and opponents while playing their sport but also toward their fellow students during the academic year. The effects were moderate in size (β range = .26 - .33). Thus, how one approaches the achievement context has implications for one's behavior in that context and may generalize to other contexts.

Passion

Passion has been defined as a strong inclination toward an activity that one likes, finds important, and in which one invests a significant amount of time and energy (Vallerand, Blanchard, Mageau, Koestner, Ratelle, Leonard, & Gagne, 2003). The distinction has also been made between harmonious passion, in which the person is fully engaged in the activity, has control over the activity, and the activity is in harmony with the person's other activities, versus obsessive passion, in which one feels compelled to engage in the activity, experiences conflict, and the activity takes a lot of space in the person's self (Vallerand et al., 2003). Donahue, Rip and Vallerand (2010) examined the relationship between passion and reactive aggression (e.g., At times I cannot control my urge to harm an opponent) in basketball players. Athletes with a predominantly obsessive passion for basketball reported higher levels of reactive aggression than athletes with a predominantly harmonious passion. This suggests that how athletes approach the activity has implications for their aggressive behavior.

Moral Identity

Moral identity has been defined as "the cognitive schema a person holds about his or her moral character" (Aquino, Freeman, Reed, Lim, & Felps, 2009, p. 124) and can function as a self-regulatory mechanism that motivates moral action (Blasi, 1984). This construct originated from the work of Blasi (1984), who proposed that a common set of moral traits are likely to be central to most people's moral self-definitions and being a moral person may occupy different levels of importance in each person's self-concept. Aquino and Reed (2002) identified nine traits (i.e., caring, compassionate, fair, friendly,

generous, helpful, hardworking, honest, and kind) as being characteristic of a moral person and found variation in the degree to which these traits were central to one's self-concept. The extent to which the moral self-schema is experienced as being central to one's self-definition has been referred to as the internalization dimension of moral identity (Aquino & Reed, 2002) and has been the main focus of empirical research.

To date, only one study has investigated moral identity in the sport context. Sage et al. (2006) presented adult male soccer players with the nine traits identified as being characteristic of a moral person (Aquino & Reed, 2002), and measured the importance of possessing these characteristics to the players. The more central these characteristics were to the players' self-concept, the less likely the players were to report engaging in antisocial behavior while playing soccer. This effect was medium to large ($r = -.38$) suggesting that moral identity is an important variable to consider in sport morality research. However, contrary to research findings in other contexts - that moral identity predicted actual food donations to less well-off groups (Aquino & Reed, 2002) - this construct did not predict prosocial behavior in soccer players. This may be due to the different measures of prosocial behavior employed in the two studies. Nevertheless, it is still unknown whether moral identity is associated with higher prosocial behavior in the sport context. It is possible that the competitive nature of sport buffers the positive effects of moral identity on prosocial behavior, particularly toward opposition players.

Moral Disengagement

Moral disengagement is a construct described by Bandura (1991, 1999), who proposed that via socialization, children develop moral standards from a variety of influences. These moral standards regulate conduct through evaluative self-reactions. For example, individuals feel pride when behaving in ways that match their moral standards and guilt when their actions violate these standards. These evaluative self-reactions regulate conduct anticipatorily: People do things that give them self-satisfaction and refrain from behaving in ways that will bring self-disapproval (Bandura, 1991).

However, people are able to minimize the anticipated negative affect and behave transgressively by employing moral disengagement mechanisms. These mechanisms act by cognitively reconstruing the harmful behaviors into benign ones, minimizing personal accountability for transgressive acts, misrepresenting the injurious effects that result from harmful conduct, or blaming the character or actions of the victim (Bandura, 1991). The eight mechanisms are: euphemistic labeling, moral justification, advantageous comparison, diffusion of responsibility, displacement of responsibility, distortion of consequences, dehumanization, and attribution of blame. A full description can be found in Bandura (1991), and sport-specific examples of each mechanism have been provided by Boardley and Kavussanu (2007).

Moral disengagement in sport has received a lot of research attention in recent years, with abundant evidence attesting to its occurrence (see Boardley & Kavussanu, 2011). Displacement of responsibility, attribution of blame and distortion of consequences are particularly popular mechanisms among athletes (Corrion, Long, Smith, & d'Arripe-Longueville, 2009). In the first study that provided quantitative evidence for the link between moral disengagement and moral behavior in sport, moral disengagement was positively and strongly associated with antisocial behavior ($r = .60$) among team sport athletes (Boardley & Kavussanu, 2007). In line with expectations, its relationship to prosocial behavior was negative ($r = -.34$). This pattern of relationships has been repeated in other studies (e.g., Boardley & Kavussanu, 2009, 2010). Overall, the findings of these studies show that how one thinks about moral issues in sport has clear implications for one's behavior.

Self-regulatory Efficacy

In his social cognitive theory, Bandura (2001) highlights the importance of self-efficacy as a self-regulatory mechanism for behavior. d'Arripe-Longueville et al. (2010), tested self-regulatory mechanisms governing prosocial behavior and the acceptability and likelihood of cheating in adolescent students. Participants responded to scenarios describing hypothetical situations in team

sports, in which they may be tempted to cheat (i.e., break a rule in basketball), and indicated whether they thought it was okay to cheat (acceptability of cheating) and how likely they would be to cheat if put into the protagonist's position (likelihood of cheating). Affective self-regulatory efficacy (i.e., efficacy to manage mood with opponents) positively predicted resistive self-regulatory efficacy (i.e., efficacy to resist engaging in high-risk activities, for example peer pressure to cheat in sport), which, in turn, positively predicted prosocial behavior toward teammates through social efficacy (i.e., beliefs in one's capabilities to form and maintain social relationships, work cooperatively with others, and manage different types of interpersonal conflict). Affective self-regulatory efficacy also had a negative effect on moral disengagement, which in turn predicted acceptability and likelihood of cheating and decreased prosocial behavior. This is an interesting study that examined the network of relationships including several direct and indirect effects among a number of predictors. Given that sport morality is a complex phenomenon, this approach is more likely to enhance our understanding of this phenomenon. However, the researchers did not report the sports in which students participated to determine the suitability of the specific scenarios to the participants' athletic experience.

Summary

In summary, a number of individual difference variables have been associated with sport morality. Ego orientation, extrinsic motivation, controlling reasons for pursuing performance approach goals, fear of failure, and obsessive passion have been found to correspond to low levels of morality. An underlying dimension of these variables may be the pressure one puts on the self to perform. Moral identity, moral disengagement and self-regulatory efficacy have also been associated with moral behavior in sport. However, individual difference variables paint only part of the picture. A significant role in moral action in sport is also played by the athletes' social environment. Research pertaining to the social context is reviewed next.

Social Antecedents of Moral Behavior

Sport does not occur in a social vacuum. The social context in which sport takes place has the potential to exert a powerful influence on participants' moral action. The social context refers to the people associated with the sport experience, for example the coach and teammates, who form athletes' immediate team environment; parents, who are part of the wider social sport context; and referees who could affect athletes' behavior during a game. Research pertaining to these individuals is reviewed next. In the vast majority of studies, discussed in this section, the constructs were assessed via athlete perceptions. Thus, although they are described as aspects of the social context, they actually represent *perceived* aspects of that context. The assessment of the social environment via participants' perceptions reflects, in part, the view that it is through the individuals' perceptions that social agents exert their influence (see Ames, 1992).

Coach and Teammates

Athletes train with their coach and teammates and play with their teammates in the presence of the coach. Given that, for most of their athletic life, athletes come in contact with their coach and teammates, it is not surprising that these individuals have been found to have an important impact on athletes' behavior. Several coach characteristics and behaviors have been investigated and are reviewed in this section. These are character-building efficacy, effectiveness, and competency, attitudes, motivational climate and moral atmosphere of the team.

Character-building efficacy, effectiveness, and competency. Character-building efficacy, effectiveness, and competency are constructs derived from the coaching efficacy model. This model was proposed by Feltz and colleagues (Feltz, Chase, Moritz, & Sullivan, 1999), who defined coaching efficacy as the extent to which coaches believe that they have the capacity to influence the learning and performance of their athletes. One of its dimensions is character-building efficacy, which refers to coaches' beliefs in their ability to influence their athletes' personal development and positive attitude

toward sport. Feltz and her colleagues (1999) proposed that coaches high in character-building efficacy should demonstrate greater frequency of character-development behaviors, such as promoting good sportspersonship, respect for others, and fair play, and should have athletes who display more positive attitudes towards sportspersonship and exhibit more fair play behaviors.

The only study that has tested this link, to date, has not found a relationship between character-building coaching efficacy and reported likelihood to aggress against an opponent in football (Chow, Murray, & Feltz, 2009). However, coaches high in game-strategy efficacy had athletes who reported high likelihood to commit an aggressive act. Game-strategy efficacy refers to the coaches' belief in their ability to coach and lead their team to a successful performance during competition (Feltz et al., 1999) and has been positively associated with coaches' past won-lost record (Feltz et al., 1999). Thus, Chow et al.'s (2009) finding may suggest that more successful coaches may have more aggressive players. However, research is needed to verify this hypothesis.

Two studies have examined how *effective* or *competent* coaches are in influencing their players' personal development and positive attitude toward sport. These two constructs, which were proposed independently, were measured by adapting the relevant items from the Coaching Efficacy Scale (Feltz et al., 1999). In the first study (Boardley, Kavussanu, & Ring, 2008), rugby players who perceived that their coach was effective in instilling an attitude of good moral character, fair play and respect for others, and promoting good sportsmanship, were more likely to report prosocial behaviors toward their opponents while playing rugby. In the second study (Boardley & Kavussanu, 2009), hockey and netball players, who perceived that their coach was competent in promoting these attitudes and behaviors, were more likely to report higher prosocial behavior toward opponents and lower antisocial behavior toward both opponents and teammates. The effects of character-building competency on behavior were mediated by moral disengagement. That is, character-building competency was a negative predictor of

moral disengagement, which, in turn, was a negative predictor of prosocial behavior and a positive predictor of antisocial behavior.

Fair play attitudes and relational support. Two other coach variables relevant to moral behavior in sport are their fair-play attitudes, for example whether they respect the opponent and the rules of the game, and the relational support with which they provide their players in terms of acceptance, emotional support, respect for autonomy, quality of communication, and convergence of goals. For instance, a coach who lets athletes solve their problems as much as possible, but also helps them out when athletes ask him to, is one who provides high relational support. Rutten and her colleagues (2008) found that adolescent soccer players, who perceived their coach as holding fair-play attitudes, were less likely to engage in antisocial behavior while playing soccer. In addition, players, who perceived that their coach provided relational support, were more likely to engage in prosocial behavior. Thus, fair-play attitudes and relational support appear to have an impact on soccer players' prosocial and antisocial behavior.

Motivational climate. Motivational climate, a construct of achievement goal theory refers to the situational goal structure, that is the achievement goals emphasized and the criteria for success (in that context) that are conveyed to the participants by significant others, such as coaches, teachers and parents (Ames, 1992). Those significant others determine important features of the achievement context such as the evaluation procedures and the distribution of rewards, and via their behavior they communicate to the athletes what is valued in that context. Coaches can create a performance motivational climate, by rewarding only the top athletes and valuing normative ability, or a mastery climate by focusing on skill development, defining success as individual progress, valuing effort, and rewarding participants for effort and improvement. Similar to its dispositional counterpart, ego orientation, performance motivational climate is assumed to lead to antisocial behavior in sport. Because in this type of climate the emphasis is on doing better than others, players may be tempted to

cheat or engage in other behaviors that could facilitate this goal. In contrast, mastery climate is more likely to promote prosocial sport behavior.

Several studies have investigated the relationship between perceived motivational climate and moral action in sport. These studies have consistently shown that when players perceive a performance motivational climate in their team they are more likely to report higher frequency of antisocial behavior toward their opponents (e.g., Kavussanu & Spray, 2006; Miller, Roberts, & Ommundsen, 2005; Ommundsen, Roberts, Lemyre, & Treasure, 2003) as well as toward their teammates (Boardley & Kavussanu, 2009). Finally, this type of climate has been positively associated with instrumental aggression in male handball players (Rasclé, Coulomb-Cabagno, & Delsarte, 2005). With the exception of two studies in which mastery climate positively predicted prosocial behavior toward teammates (Boardley & Kavussanu, 2009) and opponents (Kavussanu, 2006), mastery climate has generally not been associated with moral behavior in sport. A mastery climate, especially if it has a cooperative behavior component, may lead to prosocial behavior but it will not necessarily deter antisocial conduct. It is the value placed on normative success, communicated to the athletes via the coaches' behavior, that could lead players to cheat, injure and verbally abuse other players.

Moral atmosphere. The construct of moral atmosphere is based on the work of Kohlberg and colleagues (e.g., Power, Higgins, & Kohlberg, 1989). In the sport psychological literature it has been operationally defined as a set of collective norms regarding morally relevant action on the part of group members (Shields & Bredemeier, 1995). In a sport team, certain philosophies – which are partly the outcome of characteristics of the coach and team members - are developed over time regarding what is appropriate behavior. Teammates' perceptions of their peers' choices in situations that give rise to moral conflict are also part of the moral atmosphere (Shields & Bredemeier, 1995).

Stephens and Bredemeier (1996) were the first to examine moral atmosphere in relation to self-reported likelihood to aggress against an opponent in young female soccer players. They measured

athletes' perceptions of the number of teammates willing to tackle an opponent from behind and the degree of importance their coach placed on task and ego goals for the team as dimensions of moral atmosphere. Players who perceived that a large number of their teammates would behave aggressively in a hypothetical situation and that their coach placed importance on ego goals for the team (e.g., it was important to the coach that the team is the best team) also indicated greater likelihood to behave aggressively. Athletes' perceptions of their team's pro-aggressive norms were the main predictor of reported likelihood to aggress in several other samples of young basketball and soccer players (e.g., Chow et al., 2009; Stephens, 2000).

Moral atmosphere has also been examined in relation to moral judgment, intention and behavior (collectively referred to as moral functioning). This line of research has typically presented athletes with scenarios describing antisocial behaviors (see Kavussanu, Roberts, & Ntoumanis, 2002) and examined their perceptions of the number of teammates who would engage in these behaviors as well as their perceptions of their coach as encouraging the behaviors in question. In both items, the qualifier "if it was necessary for the team to win" was used in line with Shields and his colleagues (Shields, Bredemeier, Gardner, & Bostrom, 1995). Basketball and soccer players, who thought that their coach encouraged antisocial conduct and that a large number of their teammates would engage in such conduct, if it was necessary for the team to win, also reported lower levels of moral functioning (Kavussanu et al., 2002; Kavussanu & Spray, 2006; Miller et al., 2005).

An interesting finding revealed in a few studies is the strong link between moral atmosphere and performance motivational climate (e.g., Kavussanu et al., 2002; Kavussanu & Spray, 2006; Ommundsen et al., 2003). Specifically, players who perceive that their coaches create a performance motivational climate in their team also perceive these coaches as encouraging them to push another player, fake an injury, or risk injury to their opponents, if such behaviors are necessary for the team to

win. This finding suggests that coaches who create a performance motivational climate in their team may value winning over the players' welfare.

Parents

Parents are not part of the immediate team environment, but are important social agents particularly in childhood and young adolescence. Thus, their attitudes and behaviors should have an influence on young players' moral action in the sport context, particularly when they are actively involved with their child's sport participation. Parental constructs have received much less research attention compared to that received by variables referring to the coach and team members. Parental motivational climate, parental attitudes and social approval have been examined in relation to moral action in sport and are discussed below.

Parental motivational climate. The perceived parent-initiated motivational climate in physical activity contexts has been described as having three dimensions: learning and enjoyment, success without effort and worry-conducive (White, Duda, & Hart, 1992). The first dimension is equivalent to a mastery climate, while the latter two correspond to a performance motivational climate. To date, only one study has investigated the parent-initiated climate – along with other parental influence variables - in relation to good and bad sport behaviors (LaVoi & Babkes Stellino, 2008). These behaviors have been defined as positive and negative things respectively that players do on and off the ice during games and practices (LaVoi & Babkes Stellino, 2008). Some of the measured behaviors (e.g., helping an opponent off the ice, hurt opponents on purpose) are equivalent to the prosocial and antisocial behaviors examined in other studies (e.g., Kavussanu & Boardley, 2009; Sage et al., 2006); others (e.g., thank the coach, complain about ice time) do not clearly fit the prosocial and antisocial behavior definitions (Eisenberg & Fabes, 1998; Sage et al., 2006); and others (e.g., feel play outside of rules is part of game) represent attitudes rather than behaviors.

Nevertheless, this study reported some interesting findings regarding the link between parental climate – as well as other parental influence variables - and good and bad behaviors. Specifically, players' perceptions of a learning and enjoyment parental climate (e.g., my parent is most satisfied when I learn something new) and parental involvement (e.g., the extent to which parents were involved in their child's sport participation) were positively associated with good behaviors and inversely linked to bad behaviors in ice hockey. Interestingly, parents' expectations that their children's performance should demonstrate high levels of competence were positively associated with bad behaviors, which were also more likely in players who perceived a worry-conducive parental climate (e.g., "my parent makes me worried about failing). These findings suggest that children and young adolescents may be sensitive to their parents' expectations regarding their performance in sport and these perceptions might in turn affect their behavior.

Parental attitudes. Another aspect of parental influence concerns the attitudes parents hold toward their children's behavior. Shields and colleagues referred to bad or poor behaviors as ethically problematic behaviors reflecting cheating, aggression, and disrespect, and examined perceived parental attitudes toward poor sport behaviors in a large sample of athletes drawn from team sports (Shields, La Voi, Bredemeier, & Power, 2007). Participants were asked to indicate how disappointed their parents would be if they engaged in poor sport behaviors (e.g., cheated, tried to hurt an opponent) and to report their own poor sport behavior during the season (e.g., cheated to help their team win, tried to hurt an opponent to help their team win). A small to medium ($r = -.26$) negative correlation was reported between these two variables indicating that players who thought that their parents would be disappointed if they engaged in poor behaviors were less likely to engage in such behaviors.

Social approval. Social approval can be a powerful influence on sport behavior particularly at a young age. The relationship between social approval and moral action in youth basketball players was examined by Stuart and Ebbeck (1995). Athletes were presented with basketball-specific moral

dilemmas describing behaviors such as injuring another player to prevent a basket and pushing an opposing player when the referees are not looking and were asked about their perceptions of how their mother, father, coach, and teammates viewed the behaviors. Players in grades 7 and 8 (but not 4 and 5), who perceived that those significant others approved antisocial behaviors, were more likely to be rated by their coaches as engaging in these behaviors. These findings suggest that social approval may have effects on young adolescents but not children.

Referees

Although referees are important in organised sport, surprisingly little research has investigated these social agents as part of the sport social environment. Referees can have an impact on athletes' behavior through the decisions they make during a game. In one study, Faccenda, Pantaleon, and Reynes (2009) randomly assigned soccer players (mean age = 20) to two groups. Half the participants responded to six scenarios describing correct refereeing calls, and the other half responded to six scenarios describing refereeing errors representing just and unjust contexts, respectively. In both cases, all the behaviors described were transgressive regardless of the referee's decision. An example of a scenario used is:

You are playing a very important match. The score is tied and the game is almost over. You are alone, in a good position to score. The only way that the last defender can stop you is to push you and foul. You do not score. The referee sanctions/does not sanction this player. When you get up, you strike the opponent player. (Faccenda et al., 2009, p. 405)

Participants indicated how often they really engaged in the described behavior during matches. In addition, they indicated whether or not the described behavior was acceptable (moral judgment) and whether or not they would tend to engage in the described behavior (moral intention). Results showed that players, who were presented with an "unjust" refereeing decision, reported more frequent engagement in the behaviors than players who were presented with the just scenario. They also judged

transgressive behaviors as acceptable and indicated the intention to engage in such behaviors. These findings suggest that players may be concerned with seeing justice occur. If the referee does not make a just decision, players feel empowered to punish their opponent, thereby restoring justice. Of course this could have negative consequences for their own team as in this particular case they can be given a red card and removed from the game.

Summary

In summary, athletes' perceptions of several attributes, beliefs, and behaviors of their coaches, teammates, and parents have implications for their own actions in the sport context. Many desirable coaching variables such as character-building coaching effectiveness and fair play attitudes have been positively associated with prosocial behavior, while learning/enjoyment parental climate has been linked to good behaviors. Conversely, moral atmosphere that endorses antisocial conduct, performance coach-initiated and worry-conducive parent-initiated motivational climates may promote antisocial behavior in the sport context. These constructs are manifested in undesirable behaviors that could put pressure on athletes to perform. Finally, unjust referee decisions may elicit antisocial behavior.

Demographics and Context Characteristics

In addition to identifying individual difference and social-environmental variables associated with moral behavior in sport, researchers have examined participant and context characteristics that do not represent a theoretical construct. These are gender, age, and competitive level. Participation in certain sports has also been associated with sport morality, but this research has been reviewed elsewhere (Kavussanu, 2007). In addition to reporting links between demographic and context characteristics and moral sport behavior, some attempts have been made to explain why some relationships may occur.

Gender

One of the most consistent findings in sport morality research is differences between males and females. Specifically, males from a variety of team sports have reported higher antisocial behavior toward opponents (Kavussanu & Ntoumanis, 2003; Kavussanu & Roberts, 2001; Miller et al., 2005) and teammates (Kavussanu & Boardley, 2009), while male soccer and handball players engaged in more aggressive acts than their female counterparts (Coulomb-Cabagno & Rascle, 2006). Male soccer players have also reported lower prosocial behavior toward their opponents but higher prosocial behavior toward their teammates (Kavussanu & Boardley, 2009). These latter findings suggest that the consistent gender differences found in empirical research may be due to the utilization of measures assessing antisocial behavior toward opponents. Although male athletes appear less likely to help their opponents, they may be more willing to encourage, support, and give positive feedback to their teammates. Thus, to further our understanding of sport morality it is important to consider both prosocial and antisocial behavior toward teammates and opponents.

Even though identifying gender differences in moral behavior is important, it is equally important to understand why such differences may exist, that is what leads males to engage in antisocial conduct more often than females while playing sport. This was the main purpose of a study by Kavussanu and her colleagues (2009), who found that male soccer players engaged in a higher number of antisocial behaviors than their female counterparts during one soccer game; a diverse number of behaviors were coded from videotaped soccer games. Sport experience, performance motivational climate, and empathy (i.e., the ability to take the perspective of others and experience feelings of sympathy, compassion, and concern for unfortunate others; Davis, 1983) were also examined. Male players had played soccer for a longer period of time, perceived a higher performance climate in their team, and reported lower empathy than female players. Importantly, when the effects of these variables were statistically removed from behavior scores, the significant gender differences in antisocial behavior

were substantially reduced. These findings provide preliminary evidence to suggest that males may engage in more antisocial behaviors than females *because* they play their sport for a longer time (possibly because they are used to the occurrence of antisocial behavior in that context), are less empathic, and play in teams that are characterized by a higher performance motivational climate compared to the climate in female teams. Indeed, these variables have been consistently associated with antisocial behavior in sport research (e.g., Kavussanu, 2006; Kavussanu & Boardley, 2009; Sagar et al., 2011).

Age

Age is the second demographic variable associated with moral action in sport. However, the literature is limited to adolescents and young adults. Age differences in moral behavior were investigated in two studies, both of which used male soccer players and coded behaviors from videotaped matches. In the first study, prosocial and antisocial behaviors were examined in three age groups (under 13, under 15, and under 17); each group was represented by eight teams, and only one game was coded per team (Kavussanu et al., 2006). The oldest group displayed more frequent antisocial behaviors than the two younger groups and less frequent prosocial behaviors than the youngest group. The three age groups also differed in their perceptions of the motivational climate created by the coach such that the youngest group perceived a higher mastery climate in their team compared to the other two groups and a lower performance motivational climate than the oldest group. Analysis of covariance showed that age group differences in antisocial and prosocial behavior were substantially reduced when motivational climate was included as covariate. These findings provide some preliminary evidence that the higher frequency of antisocial and lower frequency of prosocial behaviors observed in older teams may be due to the different types of motivational climate prevalent in these teams.

In the second study (Romand, Pantaleon, & Cabagno, 2009), instrumental and hostile aggression was examined in six teams ranging in age between 8 – 25 years old representing children, adolescents, and young adults. Each team was observed for three games, and for each player, one score for instrumental and one score for hostile aggression were calculated for the three games. Children displayed less instrumental aggression than adolescents, who in turn were less aggressive than adults; there were no cohort-related differences in hostile aggression. This study offers more consistent evidence for the occurrence of antisocial conduct in soccer. That is, because their instrumental aggression score was calculated over three games it should be more representative of players' typical behavior. The findings of this study suggest that athletes may simply learn to use aggression for instrumental purposes but are not necessarily more hostile toward other players at older ages.

These two studies show that antisocial behavior is more frequent in older adolescents and young adults. Both studies are important because they employed observational methods to measure behavior thereby assessing observed rather than reported behavior. However, both studied only young male soccer players. Thus, the generalisability of their findings to other populations (e.g., females, other team sports, athletes in middle adulthood) is unknown. Finally, both studies were cross-sectional employing three different age groups, thus, cohort-related factors could provide alternative explanations for the age differences in sport behavior observed in these studies. Longitudinal studies in which the same athletes and teams are studied over a number of years would provide stronger evidence for the causal role of motivational climate on sport behavior.

Competitive Level

Moral behavior also varies as a function of competitive level. Rascle et al. (2005) videotaped young male handball players (ages 13-15) and coded instrumental and hostile aggression. Players competing at a higher competitive level displayed more instrumental aggression than those competing at a lower level; competitive level had no effect on hostile aggression. Coulomb-Cabagno and Rascle

(2006) coded instrumental and hostile aggression from 90 handball and 90 soccer games of French championships equally distributed among three competitive levels. Instrumental aggression increased linearly when competitive level increased in females, but decreased in regional and increased in national level in males. However, males displayed high instrumental aggression across all levels. Hostile aggression decreased linearly in males, but there was no significant difference across competitive levels in females who, overall, displayed very low levels of hostile aggression. It appears that competitive level may affect instrumental but not hostile aggression; this is in line with the age differences in instrumental but not hostile aggression reported above (Romand et al., 2009).

Interventions

The studies discussed so far show that a number of variables have been linked to moral behavior in sport. Thus, there would seem to be a sufficient knowledge base to develop interventions in the sport context. Despite the growing evidence pointing to factors associated with moral sport behavior, few interventions aimed at reducing antisocial and promoting prosocial behavior in sport have been conducted, and these have been implemented in physical education. The two studies reported in this section developed interventions based on principles from both social learning (Bandura, 1977) and structural-developmental theories (e.g., Kohlberg, 1984).

In the first study, Gibbons et al. (1995) examined the effect of participation in educational activities designed to enhance fair play on prosocial behavior of elementary school children. Intact classrooms were randomly assigned to either a Fair Play for Kids curriculum during physical education only, a Fair Play for Kids curriculum during all school subjects, or a control group. This curriculum includes educational activities that focus on the development of attitudes and behaviors that exemplify the following fair play ideals: respect for rules, the opponent, the officials, and their decisions, providing all individuals with an equal chance to participate, and maintaining self control at all times (see Gibbons et al., 1995). Teachers rated children on ten behaviors commonly associated with fair play

in sports and games (e.g., arguing with teammates, showing off, teasing others). Behavior was measured before and after the intervention, which lasted seven months. Children in the two intervention groups exhibited significantly higher posttest behavior scores compared to those in the control group when individual students were used as the unit of analysis.

The second study was conducted by Hassandra and her colleagues (Hassandra, Goudas, Hatzigeorgiadis, & Theodorakis, 2007), who administered a 10-week intervention intended to promote fair-play behaviors during games in elementary school students. *Fair play* was defined as respect for rules, teammates, opponent, and officials and their decisions, and consisted of prosocial and antisocial behaviors. The researchers assigned four classes to an experimental group and four classes to a control group. Examples of the experimental group strategies implemented are demonstration of desirable behaviors, verbal reinforcement of positive social behaviors, rewards (i.e., color cards) when students had shown the target behaviors, and discussion of moral dilemmas. The experimental group showed significant improvements in the fair-play behaviors from pre to post test, whereas the control group showed no change. Importantly, group differences were maintained after two months.

Given that moral behavior intervention studies are rare in physical activity contexts, these investigations make an important contribution to the literature: The studies showed that teachers can promote students' fair play behaviors. However, these findings may not generalize to competitive sport. Although sport and physical education share many features, the social experiences athletes have and the moral issues they face in the two contexts are quite distinct. To date, no studies exist to verify the efficacy of interventions designed to promote prosocial and reduce antisocial behavior in sport. This is a fruitful avenue for future research.

Implications for Morality in Other Performance Domains

Morality is relevant in any interpersonal context. Thus, moral issues can arise in other performance domains that involve interaction among participants, for example, the work place,

education, music, and the arts. Some of the variables that have been examined in the sport domain have also been investigated in other performance domains. In this section, examples of this work are provided and implications of sport morality research for other performance domains are discussed.

One study has examined antisocial behavior in sport and education. Specifically, Sagar et al. (2011) investigated whether fear of failure and the extent of participation in team sport predicted antisocial behavior toward one's teammates and opponents in the sport context and toward one's fellow students in education. Athletes drawn from a variety of team sports, who scored high on a general measure of fear of failure and who reported extensive involvement in their team sport were more likely to behave antisocially toward other players while playing their sport and toward their fellow students during the academic year. Moreover, antisocial behavior in sport was positively related to antisocial behavior in education (Sagar et al., 2011).

Several variables associated with moral behavior in sport have also been empirically linked to moral behavior in education and have implications for morality in the work place. Specifically, students who are high in ego orientation, focus on extrinsic rewards, experience parental and peer pressure for achieving high grades, and perceive a performance motivational climate in their class are more likely to cheat in their exams (for a review see Murdock & Anderman, 2006). A performance motivational climate created by one's manager in the work place should have similar effects on employee behavior. That is, rewarding only the best performers and constantly and explicitly drawing employees' attention to how their performance compares to that of their colleagues may lead to less prosocial behavior toward one's colleagues. Such a motivational climate may also increase the likelihood of cheating.

Many other dispositional variables linked to moral behavior in sport should also have implications for moral behavior in other performance domains. For example, the individual who views being a moral person as highly central to his self concept (i.e., moral identity centrality) is less likely to cheat, lie, or try to undermine other performers in order to look better in the eyes of a director, thereby

winning an important role in the play. Conversely, these behaviors may be seen more often in performers who are motivated by prestige and extrinsic rewards, are concerned with doing better than others, are motivated to avoid failure, and are obsessively passionate about the activity. These characteristics should have universal application and are relevant to any performance domain.

It is also important to recognize that team sport – where the vast majority of sport morality research has been conducted - is a unique context, in that it is by definition a competitive context in which one has teammates and opponents. Participants unavoidably interact with these individuals during competition. Through this interaction, moral issues are likely to arise, and athletes have opportunities to act both prosocially and antisocially. In contrast, musicians, actors, and other artists typically perform on their own or as part of a team. Some performers, for instance musicians, may take part in competitions, but such competitions are not a defining feature of performance in music, theatre, or art. Thus, normally these performers are not involved in direct competition with others, and there are no formal rules of “play” by which they need to abide *during* performance. As a result, performers in other domains do not face the same moral issues as (team) sport performers.

The team dynamics are also different between sport and other performance domains. A theater or orchestra director is concerned with actors or musicians performing the best they can. Thus, their approach to performance is clearly task involved. Although the very act of performing in front of an audience may raise concerns about one’s adequacy as a performer, the play or orchestra director cannot possibly encourage antisocial conduct toward opponents because no such opponents exist. Thus, research on character-building effectiveness, moral atmosphere of the team, and performance motivational climate - as these variables have been measured in the sport context - may not have implications for morality in other performance domains. In sum, much – but not all – of the sport morality research findings have implications for moral conduct in other performance domains.

Conclusions and Directions for Future Research

The proliferation of sport morality research has led to a substantial increase in our understanding of the factors associated with moral behavior in sport. The manner one thinks about moral issues, the centrality of moral identity to one's self, self-efficacy to regulate emotion, and a range of motivational variables, appear to influence athletes' moral action within the athletic context. However, the most significant effect seems to come from the social environment. When athletes perceive that their coach encourages, and their teammates are willing to cheat and aggress against others, they are more likely to also cheat and aggress against their opponents. Moreover, an emphasis on normative success may be detrimental to fair play. Despite our enhanced understanding of sport morality, many issues remain and need to be addressed in future research.

First, we know very little about moral behavior in individual sports. Although such research does exist (e.g., Donahue et al., 2006), most studies have used team sport athletes. The limited research in individual sports may, in part, be due to the lack of measures designed specifically for such sports. However, some of the items included in current measures of prosocial (e.g., encouraged a teammate) and antisocial (e.g., verbally abused an opponent) behavior are also relevant for behavior in individual sports. It would be interesting to obtain information on the frequency of moral behavior in these sports.

Second, it is important to keep in mind that most studies are cross-sectional relying on data collected at a single point in time. Although this is an important step in the research process, particularly when a predictor variable is examined for the first time, this design renders the direction of causality impossible to determine. For instance, the identified relationship between moral disengagement and antisocial behavior does not tell us whether moral disengagement led to antisocial behavior, antisocial behavior led to moral disengagement, these two variables reciprocally influenced each other, or that they were both influenced by a third unmeasured variable. Longitudinal designs, whereby both variables are measured at two (or more) time points - sufficiently distant to allow for

change to take place - are needed. Researchers can then determine, for example, whether the change in behavior from time 1 to time 2 is predicted by moral disengagement at time 1 or whether the change in moral disengagement from time 1 to time 2 is better predicted by antisocial behavior at time 1. This type of design provides stronger evidence for the direction of causality. However, a better test of this issue can be achieved with experimental designs, whereby the effects of manipulating moral disengagement - or other variables - on antisocial behavior are examined in the laboratory.

Investigating sport morality in the laboratory necessitates the use of suitable tasks to assess moral behavior in that context. One approach is to use - or create - laboratory analogs of the sport context, such as the table soccer task employed by Sage and Kavussanu (2007b) to examine prosocial and antisocial behavior during a motor-skill based competition. Murphy (2009) has suggested that video sports games can be utilized to study such behavior in an easily observed and measured environment. Alternatively, researchers could investigate athletes' aggression using well-established paradigms, such as the Taylor Aggression Paradigm (1967). This paradigm involves a reaction time competition, where the participant competes against a fictitious opponent, under various levels of provocation and has been extensively used in laboratory aggression studies. Finally, researchers could use implicit measures of moral attitudes, such as the Implicit Association Test, in which the strength of an attitude can be inferred by the respondents' relative reaction time, to examine judgments and attitudes about moral behavior in sport.

Third, characteristics of the social environment including team and parental variables have nearly always been measured via the individual athletes' perceptions. The rationale for this has been that individuals' perceptions of the same context vary, and it is through these perceptions that social agents exert their influence (see Ames, 1992). However, with this methodology, the degree to which athletes project their own thoughts and intentions on others is unknown. For example, in studies assessing moral atmosphere, players who behave antisocially may report that their teammates act in a similar

manner, not necessarily because they do so, but because respondents exaggerate these perceptions to justify their own behavior. Studies are needed that incorporate other methods of measuring moral atmosphere and other dimensions of the team environment. For example, individual athlete reports could be supplemented with observations of the entire team and ratings by the coach(es). Athlete reports can be aggregated and used together with coach reports, and team observations to determine the moral atmosphere of the team or other team variables.

Fourth, although most studies have investigated individual predictors of moral behavior, recently there has been a refreshing shift to examining the *mechanisms* underlying the effects of predictor variables on moral behavior, albeit with a cross-sectional design. For example, it has been found that moral disengagement mediated the effects of perceived character-building competency on prosocial and antisocial behavior (Boardley & Kavussanu, 2009), while objectifying attitude mediated the effects of controlling reasons for pursuing performance approach goals on immoral functioning (Vansteenkiste et al., 2010). Thus, researchers have started to understand why some aspects of the social context or the individual may influence sport behavior. Other potential mechanisms could be investigated: For example, performance motivational climate could influence antisocial behavior by reducing players' empathy, while social goals and mastery motivational climate may promote prosocial behavior through their positive effects on social efficacy. Most importantly, researchers need to test the *network* of relationships among a number of variables, similar to the approach taken by d'Arripe-Longueville et al (2010), discussed in a previous section. Examining how dispositional and social-environmental predictors of moral behavior are interrelated could enhance our understanding of the processes through which these variables affect moral action.

Fifth, much of the research conducted to date has investigated potential antecedents of antisocial sport behavior. We know very little about the consequences of such behavior, particularly whether it affects performance. The common belief is that by cheating and acting aggressively, players help their

team win. However, an aggressive foul that results in a red card in soccer places the team at a disadvantage, and trying to provoke opposition players to make them react and be penalized by the officials could be distracting for the instigator, as it diverts this player's attention from the game. Moreover, although cheating may help the team when it goes undetected, it could lead to disastrous consequences (for the team) when the cheat is caught. The relationship between antisocial behavior toward opponents and performance in sport is an important one and needs to be explored in future research. Potential consequences of antisocial behavior toward teammates are lower team cohesion, dissatisfaction with being a member of the team, and drop out.

Sixth, there is now sufficient knowledge base, particularly with regard to potential antecedents, to develop a model of moral action in sport. Such an attempt was made by Shields and Bredemeier (1995), who proposed a 12-component model of moral action by integrating elements from Rest's (1984) four component model of morality, Haan's (1977) model of ego processing, and the empirical moral psychology literature. Their model is a thoughtful account of research on sport morality and a good attempt to integrate the relevant literature. However, our understanding of moral action in sport has been further enhanced in the last 15 years. A model of moral action that reflects the current state of knowledge taking into consideration the unique features of the sport context would make an important contribution to the literature.

Last, but not least, is the issue of intervention. The real challenge for researchers and sport practitioners is to determine whether we can change prosocial and antisocial sport behaviors by intervening to change the variables associated with them. Evidence that moral behavior can change is available in physical education (e.g., Gibbons et al., 1995; Hassandra et al., 2007), but such evidence does not exist in sport. Interventions in sport can attempt to lower the performance motivational climate of the team, teach coaches to encourage and reward prosocial behavior, and teach parents to emphasize the importance of learning, enjoyment and fair play. The best hope for creating positive and morality-

enhancing sports experiences for young athletes may be by such social interventions in their performance environment.

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